

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 DRC-01 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

IO-14 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-03 TRSE-00

USIA-15 NSC-07 SCI-06 OMB-01 PA-04 PRS-01 L-03 SP-03

SS-20 PM-07 /129 W

----- 065952

P R 031331Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9570

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, PA

SUBJ: PFOR, SF, PA

SUBJ: STROESSNER VISIT: TEXT SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE

REF: ASUNCION 1320 (C)

SUNDAY TIMES MARCH 31 ARTICLE FOLLOWS: FULL TEN COLUMN, FOUR
INCH FRONTPAGE LEAD; HALF INCH: "PARAGUAY WAS CENTRE OF WORLD'S
GREATEST HEROIN SMUGGLING RACKET". ONE INCH: "DRUG SHADOW ON VIP
GUEST". HALF INCH: "HOW STROESSNER CLASHED WITH NIXON". BY
GUY BERNARD. DATELINE WASHINGTON, SATURDAY. TEXT:
"SOUTH AFRICA'S HARSH ANTI-DRUG LAWS HAVE AROUSED GREAT INTEREST
IN WASHINGTON BECAUSE OF THE IMPENDING STATE VISIT OF GENERAL
ALFREDO STROESSNER, PRESIDENT OF PARAGUAY, WHO ARRIVES IN
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PRETORIA ON TUESDAY."

"FOR THE PAST YEAR GENERAL STROESSNER HAS HAD TO LIVE WITH PUBLIC CHARGES THAT SOME OF HIS TOP GOVERNMENT, MILITARY AND SECRET POLICE OFFICERS WERE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE LARGEST HEROIN SMUGGLING OPERATION IN THE WORLD."

"MANY OF THE CHARGES AGAINST PARAGUAYAN LEADERS ARE CONTAINED IN THE MAY, 1973 EDITION OF THE HIGHLY RESPECTED JOURNAL, READER'S DIGEST, WHICH HAS AN ESTIMATED 100-MILLION READERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD."

"IN VIEW OF THE STAGGERING LIST OF DRUG CHARGES AGAINST PARAGUAY. OBSERVERS IN WASHINGTON FIND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE GROWING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN SOUTH AFRICA AND PARAGUAY, WHOSE ATTITUDES TO THE DRUG EVIL APPEAR TO BE SO DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED."

"THE CHARGES AGAINST PARAGUAY LED TO A BITTER CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND PRESIDENT STROESSNER IN 1972 OVER THE EXTRADITION OF AUGUSTE JOSEPH RICORD, THE MASTERMIND BEHIND THE VAST HEROIN SMUGGLING RACKET WHO HAD HIS HEADQUARTERS IN ASUNCION, THE CAPITAL OF PARAGUAY."

"HERE ARE SOME OF THE CHARGES PUBLICLY LEVELLED AGAINST PARAGUAY."

"ASUNCION WAS THE MAIN TRANS-SHIPMENT POINT WHERE HEROIN EN ROUTE TO THE UNITED STATES MARKET WAS WAREHOUSED WHILE AGENTS MADE CONTACT WITH UNDERWORLD BUYERS IN NEW YORK AND ELSEWHERE DURING THE LATE 60'S AND 70'S. TWO OF PRESIDENT STROESSNER'S TOP GENERALS, INCLUDING HIS POLICE CHIEF, WERE OPENLY SAID TO BE DEEPLY IMPLICATED."

"OFFICIALS OF THE PARAGUAYAN GOVERNMENT, ARMY AND SECRET POLICE WERE INVOLVED IN THE HEROIN SMUGGLING WHICH, IN 1967 ALONE, WAS ESTIMATED TO HAVE MOVED R102-MILLION WORTH OF THE DRUG INTO THE UNITED STATES."

"PRESIDENT STROESSNER HIMSELF HAS NEVER BEEN PERSONALLY IMPLICATED IN HEROIN SMUGGLING ALTHOUGH HIS COUNTRY IS WELL KNOWN AS ONE OF THE SMUGGLING HAVENS OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT."

"THE READER'S DIGEST NAMES CHIEF OF THE SECRET POLICE PASTOR CORONEL, ARMY GENERALS PATRICIO COLMAN AND ANDRES RODRIQUES, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER LEOPOLDO PERRIER ('WHO ALSO DOUBLED AS A PROCURER OF WOMEN'), AND THE PARAGUAYAN DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS AS AMONG THOSE INVOLVED IN THE MASSIVE HEROIN TRADE WHICH TOOK PLACE IN PARAGUAY UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF AUGUSTE RICORD."

"DOPE SUPPLIERS FROM AS FAR AWAY AS HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE
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JOCKEYED FOR BUSINESS IN ASUNCION. THEY FOUND AN IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF GOVERNMENT MINISTERS AND MILITARY LEADERS READY TO ACCOMMODATE THEM -- AT A PRICE."

"RICORD, A FRENCHMAN, WHO IN 1950 HAD BEEN SENTENCED TO DEATH IN ABSENTIA FOR COLLABORATION WITH THE NAZIS IN SENDING VICTIMS TO BUCHENWALD, WAS ARRESTED IN ASUNCION ON MARCH 25, 1971. PARAGUAY WAS NOT A MEMBER OF INTERPOL AND HAD NO NARCOTICS EXTRADITION TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES.

ACCORDING TO THE READER'S DIGEST, THE 'UNITED STATES COULD HARDLY EXPECT CO-OPERATION FROM A NATION WHOSE LEADERS PROFITED FROM THE HEROIN TRADE".

"WHEN PRESIDENT STROESSNER PASSED THROUGH NEW YORK ON HIS WAY TO JAPAN IN MARCH, 1972, AN AMERICAN NARCOTICS AGENT 'POSING AS A STEWARD, SLIPPED ABOARD THE PLANE AND SECRETLY PHOTOGRAPHED SEVERAL SUSPECTED DRUG TRAFFICKERS AMONG HIS ENTOURAGE".

"AN INFORMANT OF THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL BUREAU OF NARCOTICS ALLEGED THAT THE HEROIN RACKETEERS HAD 'PURCHASED ALMOST TOTAL PROTECTION FROM THE PARAGUAYAN GOVERNMENT".

"PRESIDENT NIXON POINTEDLY DECLINED TO SEE PRESIDENT STROESSNER WHEN THE PARAGUAYAN LEADER PASSED THROUGH NEW YORK IN 1972, WHILE THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN ASUNCION CANCELLED HIS TRADITIONAL JULY INDEPENDENCE DAY PARTY TO AVOID HAVING TO ENTERTAIN PARAGUAYAN LEADERS."

"HEROIN ARRIVING AT ASUNCION'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WAS UNLOADED BY PARAGUAYAN CUSTOMS INSPECTORS, OFTEN UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS HIMSELF."

"HEROIN WAS STORED IN GOVERNMENT-BONDED WAREHOUSES GUARDED BY PARAGUAYAN TROOPS."

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 PA-04 PRS-01 L-03 SP-03 SS-20

DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01

SNM-02 SY-03 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-07 SCI-06 OMB-01

DRC-01 PM-07 /129 W

----- 066407

P R 031331Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9571

INNO RUESAS/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 007

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

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"WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF AN AMERICAN NARCOTICS AGENT WORKING IN PARAGUAY, THE DRUG MASTER-MIND RICORD WAS ARRESTED AND HELD FOR 18 MONTHS WHILE THE UNITED STATES EXERTED INTENSE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE FOR HIS EXTRADITION."

"PRESIDENT NIXON, THEN SENT HIS TOP NARCOTICS EXPERT, NELSON GROSS, TO DELIVER A PERSONAL LETTER TO PRESIDENT STROESSNER THREATENING CESSION OF R8-MILLION A YEAR IN FOREIGN AID, PLUS REMOVAL OF FAVOURABLE SUGAR QUOTAS, UNLESS RICORD WAS HANDED OVER TO THE UNITED STATES. MORE THAN R3,5-MILLION IN CREDITS HAD ALREADY BEEN CANCELLED."

"IN A PREVIOUS TRIAL WHICH LASTED EIGHT MONTHS, THE COUR FOUND THAT RICORD SHOULD NOT BE RELEASED TO THE AMERICANS."

"AFTER CLEAR THREATS THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WAS DETERMINED TO HAVE RICORD EXTRADITED, THE PARAGUAYAN COURT OF LAST INSTANCE DECIDED TO REVERSE THE EWLLIER DECISION AND RELEASE THE INTERNATIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HEROIN RACKETEER TO THE AMERICANS."

"RICORD WAS THEN FLOWN TO NEW YORK IN A PAN-AMERICAN BOEING 707 CHARTERED FOR THIS PURPOSE BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT."

"HE STOOD TRIAL, WAS FOUND GUILTY OF SMUGGLING MASSIVE AMOUNTS OF HEROIN INTO THE UNITED STATES FROM PARAGUAY AND IS NOW SERVING A 20-YEAR JAIL SENTENCE."

RAND DAILY MAIL, APRIL 1 REPORTED THAT BERNARDO HUGO SAGUIER HEAD OF PARAGUAYAN FONMIN ADVANCE PARTY FOR STROESSNER VISIT HAD WRITTEN EDITOR SUNDAY TIMES SUNDAY NIGHT SEEKING APOLOGY AND FOUR-POINT REPUDIATION WITH SAME PROMINENCE AS SUNDAY'S REPORT, REJECTING THE ARTICLE AS "TENDENTIOUS AND FALSE" AND STATING THAT THE REPORT IN READER'S DIGEST ON WHICH ARTICLE PARTLY BASED HAD BEEN DENIED BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AS SOON AS IT APPEARED.

RAND DAILY MAIL, APRIL 2 REPORTED EDITOR OF SUNDAY TIMES JOEL MERVIS AS STANDING FIRMLY BY SUNDAY ARTICLE WHICH HAD BEEN CHECKED WITH THE READER'S DIGEST BEFORE PUBLICATION. MERVIS ALSO QUOTED AS HAVING CHECKED STORY AGAIN ON MONDAY WITH READER'S DIGEST LEGAL COUNSEL NEW YORK WHO RELEASED STATEMENT THAT MAGAZINE SATISFIED THAT THEIR ARTICLE TRUE AND CORRECT. MERVIS ALSO STATED THAT AMERICAN AMBASSADOR MAY HAVE DENIED THAT ANY OFFICIAL OF PARAGUAYAN GOVERNMENT WAS INVOLVED IN HEROIN SMUGGLING, AS CLAIMED BY GOP, BUT HE MAY NOT HAVE HAD ACCESS TO SOURCES AVAILABLE TO READER'S DIGEST.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG TRAFFIC, HEROIN, SMUGGLING, PRESS COMMENTS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PRETOR01381
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740074-0702
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740470/aaaacmqz.tel
Line Count: 221
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ASUNCION 1320 (C)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <01 AUG 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PFOR, SF, PA SUBJ: STROESSNER VISIT: TEXT SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE
TAGS: PFOR, SF, PA, READERS DIGEST, (STROESSNER, ALFREDO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005